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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

SUBJECT The Kulturbund zur Demokratischen  
Erneuerung Deutschlands

ORIGIN [REDACTED]

DATE:

INFO. March 1947  
16

DIST. XX July 1947

PAGES

SUPPLEMENT 25X1X

1. The Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands (Cultural Association for the Democratic Renaissance of Germany) is an SED front organization for the propagandizing of intellectuals in the Russian Zone of Germany. The president of the Kulturbund is the poet, Johannes Becher, who helped found it in Berlin in July 1945. Becher, a veteran Communist, sat out the years of Nazi hegemony in the Soviet Union.
2. Officials of the Kulturbund affirm on all possible occasions that their organization is non-partisan and has no political affiliations. It is doubtful, however, that the Kulturbund could long exist without enormous subsidies from either the Russians or the SED. Monthly dues amount to about one RM per person, but even allowing for a few larger contributions from affluent members, this legitimate income would still not cover the mere administrative expenses of the Kulturbund. The Land heads of this organization, for instance, receive 1,500 RM per month, while their deputies earn from 1,000 to 1,200 RM. The chiefs of the various sections of the Kulturbund in each Land also receive respectable salaries. The upkeep of the "Houses of Culture" which have been established in the Russian Zone also amounts to a considerable drain on the treasury. Reports from Mecklenburg-Vorpommern state that the Land government's finance division provides the Kulturbund with funds ranging into the hundreds of thousands of RM.
3. The Communistic nature of the Kulturbund can be deduced not only from the background of its officials or from the overwhelming majority of SED members in its general ranks, but also from the type of propaganda which is printed in its publications. Demokratische Erneuerung, the Kulturbund's Mecklenburg-Vorpommern journal, recently published an article by the Russian-trained Communist writer, Willi Fredel, entitled "Non-partisan, but not without Political Orientation" (Überparteilich—aber nicht richtungslos), which contained pure SED propaganda.

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Document No. 15

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Date: 6 Mar 78 By: 023 (033)

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Auth: DDA Memo. 4 Apr 77  
Auth: DDA REG. 27 1 1985  
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